

It Takes a Boy to Live by ohnovaks

Series: [i like you, i like you, i like you \[2\]](#)

Category: IT (Movies - Muschietti), IT - Stephen King

Genre: Alternate Universe - Modern Setting, Christmas Eve, Christmas Fluff, Coming Out, Eddie Kaspbrak Has ADHD, Eddie Kaspbrak Loves Richie Tozier, Feminine Richie Tozier, First Kiss, Fluff, Friends to Lovers, Gay Eddie Kaspbrak, Gay Richie Tozier, Love Confessions, M/M, Richie Tozier Disassociates, Richie Tozier Loves Eddie Kaspbrak, Richie Tozier is Whipped, Soft Richie Tozier, Teenage Losers Club (IT), haha yeah never heard that one before huh

Language: English

Characters: Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Eddie Kaspbrak, Mike Hanlon, Richie Tozier, Stanley Uris

Relationships: Eddie Kaspbrak & Beverly Marsh, Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier, Mike Hanlon & Richie Tozier

Status: Completed

Published: 2019-12-07

Updated: 2019-12-07

Packaged: 2019-12-16 20:16:02

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,188

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

“Richie, you know you can tell me anything, right?” He asks, voice suddenly soft, and Richie can’t say yes because he knows that he can’t tell Eddie everything.

Quickly, Richie speaks; “I know I can tell you most things,” He says easily, because he doesn’t want to lie, but he has never been good at phrasing the truth, and Eddie looks so scared and fragile in a way that he never really looks.

It Takes a Boy to Live

Author's Note:

Title is from Flowers in your Hair by Lumineers!

I recommend reading the first part in this series if you want the whole experience !!

I like you I like you I like you.

The words wouldn't stop running through Richie's head since the missed opportunity to voice them. Things have been the same as always between him and Eddie since they'd spoken in that closet, but they had also been so so different.

Eddie didn't treat Richie any different for that; he still teased him senselessly, allowed Richie's incessant physical contact (*although Richie had considerably toned it down anyway*) and argued with him over miniscule things. It'd been a week now, and it was Christmas Eve because only three of the Losers would be available at all on Christmas day (*Bev, Richie, Mike. Stan's dad didn't want him to be out celebrating Christmas*) and they wanted to all hang out together.

Bill and Mike both were in the kitchen, deemed the two most mature members of the Losers' Club and therefore allowed food-duty. Stan was on his phone texting someone while not-so-nonchalantly stealing candies from the bowl on the coffee table. Ben was staring intently at the television, which played Home Alone, and Richie sat next to him on the couch. His eyes, however, were fixed on the other two on the floor—

Beverly and Eddie were talking softly so as to not interrupt the

movie, and Bev had her hand on Eddie's leg while he painted her nails for her. The color was a cranberry red that looked much better on Bev than greens or silvers. When he puts one last coat over her pinkie, she shakes her hands to dry them faster and backs away from Eddie while the latter caps the nail polish and glances over at Richie.

The curly haired boy turns away in an attempt to make Eddie unaware of his staring. He's not sure if he's successful. "Rich?" Eddie asks, sort of meek as he places the polish on the coffee table, and *holy shit does Richie love him. I love you I love you I love you.* Richie hums. "Can I talk to you real quick?"

The smile that Eddie sends Richie's way is impossible to say no to, so he rises to his feet and follows Eddie into the other room and then—"Seriously? Talking in the closet, again?" Richie says teasingly as he watches Eddie flick on the light and shut the door behind Richie; he partially leans over Rich to do this, so their skin makes contact that sets Richie aflame.

With a dry chuckle, Eddie shuts his eyes and tilts his head back. "Richie, you know you can tell me anything, right?" He asks, voice suddenly soft, and Richie can't say yes because he knows that he *can't* tell Eddie everything. The other boy is clearly nervous, fidgeting with the ends of his sleeves, and Rich wonders how much of that is the ADHD and how much is sudden nervousness. When Richie doesn't answer, Eddie moves his eyes down to him, "Richie..."

Quickly, Richie speaks; "I know I can tell you most things," He says easily, because he doesn't want to lie, but he has never been good at phrasing the truth, and Eddie looks so scared and fragile in a way that he never really looks. *Richie doesn't want to hurt Eddie.*

In a nervous way, Eddie bites at his thumb, the skin around his cuticle. "There's something else, Richie," Eddie says, like a question, and then after a beat, "Isn't there?"

The taller boy doesn't know what to say, but his mind buzzes; *I like you I like you I like you so much, Eddie*. He finds that his bottom lip gets caught between his teeth nervously as he swallows, thickly and audibly, and closes his eyes. "Eds," He speaks, sounding wrecked, *feeling wrecked*, "I can't."

He doesn't see the frustration as it flickers across Eddie's features; "Richie, please," He begs, grabbing ahold of his shoulders frantically, and the mood shifts as Richie tries to back away from the impulsive physical contact, "*Please*. I have to know, I have to make sure." When he says this, his hands loosen but do not fall, and his sight shifts to the floor. The overhead light is just bright enough to cast a shadow over his downturned features.

"Eddie?" Richie asks, and when Eddie looks up his face is carved with raw fear; he can feel Eddie's fingers, clammy and shaky, still unwavering from his arms. He thinks he knows what's going on but he also has no idea. "If you have something to say, this is your turn, okay?" He laughs a little, but it lacks the levity that he was trying to build up. Eddie doesn't speak.

After a beat, Richie continues; "Because listen, I took a hell of a jump, okay? I took, like, ninety jumps," He pauses, thinking over the metaphor, "I'm tired, Eds," He thinks of being at the edge of a cliff, *heaving for breath, a fully well Eddie to his left*. He thinks of a foot of endless abyss between him and the other side; thinks of being told, *jump jump jump*. Maybe the other side is Eddie reciprocating, and the fall is rejection. "So is there something that you're gonna say? 'Cause I--oh!" Then hands are gripping his shirt and he's not talking.

Eddie pulls him down by the front of the sweater, bunched up in his hands, and presses their lips together. It's a little off and a lot awkward, because they're two teenagers who haven't done *any of this* before, and neither of them know how to move during this. Eddie doesn't seem like he's stopping any time soon despite this, and his lips are sort of cold against Richie's, and he can feel how chapped they are against his own. But it's Eddie, *Eddie Eddie Eddie*, and after two seconds that feel like thirty, his hands (*previously hovering awkwardly next to Eddie's head*) are pressing against either side of Eddie's neck.

The shock sets, it's *Eddie Eddie Eddie* kissing him on the mouth in a closet that smells like disinfectant spray and baby wipes, and *Eddie* is leaning on his toes and wrapping his arms around the back of Richie's neck and Richie's nervous. And excited. And, well, he bites his lip when he gets nervous, or excited, and, *yeah. Oops.*

Eddie surges away, holding his hand over his mouth; luckily it's not bleeding, and Richie thinks it's mostly the shock that caused the reaction, but that doesn't deter the guilt. "Ow, you asshole, you *bit* me!" Eddie squeaks, face a rosy pink, and Richie feels warm and shaky and tingly, like his skin is aflame, in a good way, but also a *very scary way*.

"I was nervous!" Richie says, and his voice sounds a lot higher and scratchier than it usually does, and he thinks he might cry for a second but then out comes a giggle; apparently it's contagious because Eddie lowers his hand from his lips and lets out a soft laugh too.

Still, the light laughter doesn't stop Eddie from the familiar banter.

“Your nervous habit is attacking me like a fucking vampire?” He asks, crossing his arm, a grin appearing over his bubblegum pink lips. Eddie licks his lips without even noticing but *Richie notices* and his heart flips; he can’t help but beam.

“Aw, you want me to kiss it better?” Richie asks teasingly, but then a sudden nervous tension appears in the room - Richie can’t help but feel as if it were his fault, but he’s not really sure what he’s supposed to say. *I like you I like you I like you*, his brain supplies. *No. Awful idea.*

After a moment of Eddie avoiding Richie’s eyes, he finally finds his words. “I would,” He says softly, and Richie’s heart picks up, “But you might try to maul me again.” Richie goes to respond, but then the door to the closet is sliding open.

Richie turns around just in time to see Beverly’s eyes land on them, expression shifting from neutral to suspicious. She squints at them, and Richie almost feels as if she’s staring right through him and into his mind, reading his thoughts like a novel. “What the *fuck* are you two doing in the closet?”

The next few hours go by smoothly, but still relatively tense for Richie after the kiss. He’s scared out of his mind, and he can feel Eddie’s fear radiating off of him - probably worried that Richie is going to tell, even though *Richie doesn’t even think he can form the words anyway*. Mike and Bill had brought their food; chips with spinach dip, *yuck*, and crackers with cheese and some meat Richie

can't name. They had all spread out over the couch and the carpet, neglecting the recliner in favor of all being able to sit in the same area.

Richie has settled at the far right of the couch, which was deep red, and next to him was a tense Eddie. His posture was straighter than normal, and it almost felt as if he was purposely avoiding physical contact with Richie; which, *he probably was*. Richie wasn't so bothered until fifteen minutes through the movie, Eddie still unwavering from his place, posture stiffer than Stanley's. Richie pokes Eddie's thigh with the toe of his sock, white and knee-high, two black lines circling where it wrapped around his upper shin.

Eddie flinches when he turns towards Richie, whose eyebrows are furrowed. He's sitting so that his entire body faces Eddie, back pressed against the arm rest. "You can, like, *chill*," Richie says in a whisper, "Lay down or whatever. Get comfy. I don't bite-- or, wait, *fuck*," Eddie begins to laugh at Richie's words, shaking his head, "Bad choice of words, huh? I don't bite *on purpose*."

Stupid humor aside, this seems to calm Eddie down considerably, and he relaxes; he's still smiling over at Richie when he rests his arm over Richie's legs, which are now laid across his thighs. Richie knows his expression must change; it feels like everything buzzes to life and goes silent at the same time when he sees the fond expression over Eddie's face. *I like you I like you I like you—*

"I like you."

He doesn't mean to say it, but he's too distracted to fully realize what he's said, even when he watches Eddie's pretty face change from fondness to shock; his lips are round and his cheeks are pink and his

eyes are wide. “What?” Eddie whispers, and Richie doesn’t notice Bill and Ben laugh at something on the tv, doesn’t notice Mike (*who sat just in front of the two on the floor*) turn around to look at him with a confused expression. He doesn’t see or hear anything but Eddie. *Eddie Eddie Eddie. I like you.*

“I said I like you,” Richie repeats himself, and Eddie can tell by his dazed look that he’s not all the way there, probably a mix of shock and exhaustion. Eddie knows that Richie doesn’t have the best sleep schedule or diet, and he knows that Richie stares sometimes without meaning to.

I get all weird sometimes, Richie had told Eddie once, feels like I’m in a dream or in a movie or just not in my body. Feels like everything is fake and fuzzy. Sometimes it just doesn’t feel like anything. Like I can control my actions and feel my emotions but it’s not me. Like I’m not real.

They’ve gotten the attention of Bev now, too, but Ben and Bill are too caught up in the movie and Stan is on his phone as always during movies. “Richie?” Eddie asks, watching as Richie’s eyes move down to his lips. When Richie begins to sit up, Eddie places his hand onto Richie’s knee; Richie’s leaning his weight onto his left arm, right hand falling over Eddie’s, and presses their lips together.

It’s not some big declaration this time; it’s gentle and soft, less movement. Butterflies swirl in the pit of Eddie’s stomach, and the touch of lips is gone just as quick as it came. *Okay.* They make eye contact this time, and Eddie almost thinks they’ll kiss again. Then Mike speaks; “What the *hell* was that?”

Richie flinches as he turns to look at him, biting his lip and blushing bright red. The other three boys on the floor turn to look as well,

curious but naive expressions on their faces. “No idea what you’re talking about, Mikey,” Richie says jokingly, falling back to rest against the arm of the couch. Mike laughs and shakes his head, and the attention of the room goes back to the movie screen.

That night, when the Losers have all left to their respective homes, Eddie would lay on his bed squeaking into his pillow like an excited school girl; *I like you I like you I like you* would echo in both of their minds until they fell asleep. Even then, it would appear in their dreams, spreading that warm feeling over their skin.

I like you. The best words Richie Tozier would ever decide to say.